

AVIATION

FEBRUARY 26, 1923

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The 7 hr. Gliding Record: Lieut. Thoret and the Hanriot HD14

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VOLUME
XIV

SPECIAL FEATURES

Number
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Departmental Reorganization

IF the reorganization plan for the executive departments of the Federal government, as presented by President Harding, is in effect, that little consideration has been given to the important problem involved in cases where long in the problem of national defense.

The only change that appears on the surface is that the Air Service of the Army is placed in the proposed Department of Defense under an Under-Secretary for War, that the Bureau of Aeronautics of the Navy is placed under an Under-Secretary for the Navy, that the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics is placed under the Secretary of National Defense, and that an Airplane Section is created in the Bureau of Transportation under the Secretary of Commerce. The Air Mail Service remains under the Post Office Department, although the latter's name is changed to that of Department of Communications.

It will be seen from this outline that nothing was a few weeks ago, under the reorganization plan, the changed in these government departments which are directly concerned with aeronautics. This is probably to be expected, considering that when the reorganization plan was first announced it was stated that the proposed Department of National Defense would have three great divisions: War, Navy and Air.

If we are to try to measure our first loss of defense in line of war, which is generally considered by the last military thought, and if the present depletion of effort and expenditure is to be avoided, then the new scheme of national defense should already have given the "Air" and its direction and position as equal in importance with the Army and the Navy. That such a scheme will be equal when the whole plan is discussed in public and in Congress is probable. Short of a separate Air Department, an autonomous bureau of aeronautics in a Department of National Defense is the wisest solution that will cover the adequate organization and expansion of the existing Air Force along lines developed by their own experience, rather than dictated by chaotic notions of warfare. Only thus can the Air Force truly become the first line of defense of the Nation, for only then will it be able to work out a doctrine of aerial warfare basing "from the air down" instead of "from the surface up."

Meanwhile, the National Aeronautics Association and other kindred bodies can do no greater service to the cause of aeronautics than by emphasizing how important it is for the unhampered development of our defense to have a complete grouping of all our activities within the government, under an Under-Secretary for Air. It will take courage and strong convictions to take this attitude, but one who has watched the gradual dwindling of our air forces since the war cannot but feel that if the United States is to have an air force capable of being on the first line of defense, it will have

to be organized primarily from the associates, and not from the ground, viewpoint.

Civilization and Communications

A ASSISTANT Secretary of the Navy, Boardman, in a speech delivered to the National Academy of Medicine and Social Science at Philadelphia on Jan. 29, fearlessly presented the far reaching influence upon communications have had on the progress of civilization. He said among others:

"In the first analysis, civilization is based on communications. The advance of man has been re-mediated with much aid from the communications. The importance of communications of ideas and commodities. The importance of communications in a country is proved by the distance in our own time and by constant electricity in history. The modern communications are those that have but little connection with the world of things. In general, and giving the same rule, the means of the world's time. For the great and evolved nations of today and of the past are those whose system of communications is most perfect.

"Perhaps the greatest single critical development out of early days was the Roman Empire. By the same token, it was the Roman Empire which had the best developed system for the transmission of men, ideas and commodities. The Roman made, for example, his provincial for their frequency and readiness. On them and over them flowed the communications except the tide of traffic of the Roman Empire. The Roman system of communications was perhaps, now equalled, but never excelled, until within the last hundred and fifty years. Their genius was the fastest, their tools were the sharpest and best, their post system, their tele system, remained until comparatively recently, models of a last efficiency. Through the length and breadth of their vast empire protection was afforded to commerce on land and on sea. To these excellent and well-protected lines of communication, Rome owed its rise, just past greatness and her solvents.

Furthermore, the Roman rose does not stand still. In other advances or days back, the world has been there in its vision, the people perish, and it is through our contacts with others that we reach out for new ideas and new viewpoints. In all of the most brilliant ages of man, thought has been stimulated and fertilized by auto-communication. To it we owe our nation, for it was man's restless progress over mediated seas and through national wilderness first created our country and developed the civilization of the western hemisphere."

These words are surely to be pondered over by those who believe that it is possible and better a "bad situation" to secure a national airway system which would itself expand, whether military or civil, the defense, supply lines and emergency fields without which victory is unobtainable.

Mr. Coffin Goes to Rome

One of the most important missions from the United States to Europe since the War is that of the delegates of the International Chamber of Commerce, who sailed on Feb. 19 for Rome. Harold R. Coffin, President of the National Aeronautics Association, with Col. Donald E. Root, of National Headquarters, as his aid, are among the officials attending the Congress. For the first time in the history of international commerce conferences, attendance is to be represented by officials of a national aeronautics association. Mr. Coffin, in the absence of the National Aeronautics Association, and a member of the Air Transportation Group in Rome, will represent the expanding activities of aviation in the United States. Mr. Coffin and Colonel Root will confer monthly with officials of the P.A.I. in Rome and holders in residence in England, France, Italy and Russia regarding proposed routes, air ports, and airports in the United States with the expectation that foreign contracts will be secured.

Honorary Membership in Mr. Edison

On Feb. 22, 1933, honorary membership in the National Aeronautics Association of U.S.A. was conferred upon Thomas A. Edison, in recognition of his 70th birthday. Presentation of the permanent certificate of honorary membership was made by Dr. Richard T. Pagan, of Columbia University, faculty member at the National Aeronautics Association for Aeronautics. From National Headquarters, Vice President R. L. Skidell, and Director of Information, C. A. Tinker, were present at the ceremony, which took place at the Edison plant in East Orange, N. J.

Gliding Courses

The Committee on Gliding and Soaring Flight, of which Gerald Wright in Chairman, has met and spent seriously in the way of the idea and issues discussed the country together with the requirements of terrain necessary for building glider centers, in an effort to secure information to enable them to decide where glider activity may be held in this country. At the same time, arrangements are being made to carry out gliding centers early in the coming season, with the expectation that Kuykendall and other expert gliding pilots from Europe will participate.

Meeting of the Board of Governors

The second meeting of the Board of Governors of the Association was held on Jan. 18, 1933, at the Hyattsville, Washington, D. C. Convention on the Board of Governors were held by the efforts of Vincent Auld and Marshall Field, Jr. of the General, Detroit, and Charles A. Madson, of Kermanshah, Ala., Fourth District.

A change in the bylaws, paragraph 18, article 12, under heading "Objects of Association" was voted upon and the following clause added: "to improve, equip, and so far as possible, encourage, direct and advise, such information to the sport of flying and the use of air machines to the end that such sport may be as profitable and as enjoyable as to increase the art of flying, the science of aerial navigation, and the production of aircraft."

The following resolution was unanimously carried upon the recommendation by Foster H. Adams, Vice President and Governor of the First District, that Capt. Harry C. Martin, Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics of the Navy Department, was presented to the Board of Governors in Washington. "That a letter expressing the respect and sympathy of the body be sent to Mr. Martin." This resolution was carried out.

Enters the Air Blockade

The House representative of the London Times stated that the French proposed at a conference of the price of the Paris Peace, that international legal action be taken to enforce blockade, should be observed, and in case of physical problems, such a blockade could not be made effective in the sense required by international law.

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Furthermore, army and navy

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